for control of mine fires in Jharia Coal field of Bihar.

Since the first recorded occurrence of fire in Jharia Coal field in 1916, existence of 70 fires has been reported covering an area of 17.32 sq. kms. As a result of concerted efforts made through the implementation of various schemes, five fires have been extinguished and a further spread of six has been controlled/contained.

Since the 'Advisory Panel' in comprised of full time employees of Coal India Limited (CIL) and its subsidiaries, the State Government of Bihar and representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations, the expenditure in respect of the 'Advisory Panel', if any, is expected to be insignificant.

(d) and (e) Government are concerned about the loss of coal reserves due to underground coal fires in the Jharia Coalfield of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL), Sometime back, Coal India had estimated that coal reserves of about 37 million tonnes might have been damaged due to these underground fires having an estimated value of Rs. 1100 crores (at 1989 prices).

Pithead stock of Coal India Ltd.

274. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Coal India Ltd.'s pithead stocks have accumulated to 35 m. tonnes due to lack of adequate demand for Coal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) The pithead coal stocks in Coal India Limited (CIL) as on 31-10-1993 were 34.77 million tonnes (Provisional). The accumulation of stock is mainly due to:

(i) Tendency among end users to indicate higher demands on the basis of which production targets are fixed.

(ii) A minimum level of coal stocks has to be built up by the coal companies to meet the requirements of consumers in the event of disruption in production of coal due to adverse weather conditions, power failures etc.

(iii) Mis-match between production and transportation facilities in some of the coal producing areas.

(c) Steps being taken to clear the accumulated stocks are as follows:

(i) It is proposed to meet part of demand of the consumers by draw down from the existing stocks. This shall greatly help in reducing coal stocks.

(ii) Close monitoring of despatches by rail is being maintained through interaction with the Ministry of Railways.

(iii) Increased despatches by other captive modes like merry-go-round, ropeways, belt conveyors etc. is being attempted.

(iv) To improve the availability of coal to consumers as well as to liquidate stocks, schemes for Liberalised Sale of Coal have introduced. Coal India Ltd. has also appointed Whole Sellers and Mini Traders in coal to increase off-take.

कोयले के संबंध में राज्य सरकार को रायल्टी में वृद्धि

275. श्री ब्रह्मदेव आनन्द पासवान : क्या कोयला मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार ने हाल ही में कोयले के मूल्य में वृद्धि की है;

(ख) क्या सरकार राज्य सरकारों की रायल्टी में भी वृद्धि करने का विचार रखती है;